

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3829

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY QUITO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PGOV CI

SUBJECT: GOC DISSOLVES ALL POLITICAL PARTIES

1. SUMMARY: ALONG WITH OTHER STEPS, THE GOC DISSOLVES
POLITICAL PARTIES, THUS STRIKING AT THE CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS. IF THE PARTY IS EFFECTIVELY DESTROYED,
OPPOSITION ELEMENTS MAY GRAVITATE TOWARD THE EXTREME
LEFT AS A RESULT OF THIS IMPORTANT DECISION. END SUMMARY.

2. IN A DRAMATIC TOUGHENING OF ITS POSITION, THE GOC HAS
DISSOLVED ALL POLITICAL PARTIES, TAKEN OTHER ACTIONS SPECI-
FICALLY AIMED AT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (PDC), AND AHRDENE
ITS POSITION TOWARD INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE AGAINST IT ON
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. (SEPTELS).

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3. "DIARIO OFICIAL" OF MARCH 12 PROMULGATED DECREE LAW
1697, SIGNED BY PRESIDENT PINOCHET AND THE OTHER JUNTA
MEMBERS. THE FIRST ARTICLE SWEEPINGLY DISSOLVES ALL
POLITICAL PARTIES AND ENTITIES, GROUPS, ETC., OF A POLI-
TICAL CHARACTER, CANCELS THEIR JURIDICAL STATUS, PROHIBITS
SUCH PARTIES' EXISTENCE, ORGANIZATION, ACTIVITIES AND
PROPAGANDA, AND PROHIBITS THE CARRYING OUT OF ANY PUBLIC

OR PRIVATE ACTIVITY OF A POLITICAL/PARTY NATURE.

4. FURTHER, DL 1697 PROVIDES FOR THE CONFISCATION OF THE PARTIES' PROPERTY UNLESS THE PARTY STATUTES PROVIDE FOR ANOTHER RECIPIENT IN CASE OF DISSOLUTION. INFRACTION OF ANY PROHIBITION OF ARTICLE ONE WILL BE PUNISHED BY IMPRISONMENT, OR INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL EXILE, OR BY FINE. THE LAST ARTICLE OF THE DL AMENDS CONSTITUTIONAL ACT NO. THREE (RIGHTS AND DUTIES) TO PROVIDE FOR THE DISSOLUTION, RATHER THAN RECESS, OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTIES. THE EMBASSY WILL HAVE TO CHECK THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SOME OTHER, MINOR PROVISIONS.

5. THE PREAMBULAR EXPLANATION OF THE DISSOLUTION PUTS IT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CREATION OF THE ESSENTIAL BASES OF THE NEW INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM, AS PROVIDED IN CONSTITUTIONAL ACT NO. TWO. THIS ACT PROCLAIMED AS ONE OF THE STATE'S PRINCIPAL DUTIES THE "HARMONIOUS INTEGRATION OF ALL SECTORS OF THE NATION." THE PREAMBLE STATES THAT THE PARTIES NOT IN RECESS HAD CONTINUED THEIR ACTIVITIES, AND THAT THIS HAS FOSTERED IDEOLOGICAL/PARTY CONFRONTATION INCONSISTENT WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL ACT. THE DISSOLUTION OF PARTIES IS THUS NECESSARY TO GUARANTEE EFFECTIVELY THE CARRYING OUT OF THE PERMANENT VALUES OF "CHILENIDAD."

6. COMMENT: THE NEW DECREE LAW FOLLOWS CLOSELY UPON AN ATTACK PINOCHET MADE MARCH 11 ON POLITICAL PARTIES IN GENERAL. IT GIVES THE GOVERNMENT ALL THE AUTHORITY IT SEEKS TO DRIVE THE DEMOCRATIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARTIES -- ESSENTIALLY, THE CHRISTIAN DECOCRATS AND THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (PIR) -- OUT OF BUSINESS, EVEN MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN IT HAS THE COMMUNISTS AND THE EXTREMIST MIR. WITH THEIR CLANDESTINE ORGANIZATION, THE LATTER, THOUGH FRAGMENTED, CONTINUE AT LEAST TO EXIST.

7. THESE DEVELOPMENTS REPRESENT AN IMPORTANT CHANGE IN THE STRATEGY OF THE JUNTA. HITHERTO THE LINE HAS BEEN THAT POLITICAL PARTIES WOULD EVENTUALLY HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN THE FUNCTIONING OF A NEW AND MORE RESPONSIBLE CHILEAN DEMOCRACY, AT SOME INDEFINITE TIME IN THE FUTURE. MEANWHILE, NON-MARXIST PARTIES WERE "RECESSED" -- I.E., FROZEN.

8. WITH ITS SUPPORT GRADUALLY FALLING AWAY AS A RESULT OF ITS ENFORCED INACTIVITY, THE PDC HAS BEEN CHALLENGING THE RESTRICTIONS OF THE "RECESS" DESPITE REPEATED WARNING SIGNS FROM THE GOVERNMENT. NOW, WITH HUMAN RIGHTS A BLAZING ISSUE LOCALLY AND IN THE SOUTHERN CONE, THE

HARD-LINERS AMONG THE CHILEAN MILITARY, HEADED BY
PINOCHET, HAVE PREVAILED AS REGARDS POLITICAL ACTIVITY.
TRAGICALLY, BY MOVING TO DESTROY THE DEMOCRATIC CENTER,
THE JUNTA MAY HAVE SET THE STAGE FOR A LONGER TERM CONTEST
WITH THE EXTREME LEFT, WHICH COULD BECOME THE ONLY MEAN-
INGFUL REFUGE FOR THE OPPOSITION ELEMENTS. THE CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS HAVE OFTEN POINTED OUT THIS DANGER TO US.
WHETHER IT CAN BE AVOIDED REMAINS TO BE SEEN.
POPPER

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